



WALLISDEAN PRE-SCHOOL and WALLISDEAN INFANT SCHOOL



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum?

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

What is the structure of the EYFS at Wallisdean?

Early Years at the Wallisdean Federated Schools consists of two settings; Reception Year (Year R) in Wallisdean Infant School and Wallisdean Pre-School.

Parents/Carers may apply for a place at Wallisdean Pre-School for their child aged 3-4 years old by completing a registration form. They will receive an acceptance letter upon obtaining a place.

3 or 6 hour sessions between 9.00am and 3.00pm are available term time only. All children receive the government funding of 15 hours and parents/carers can apply for 30 hour funding.

The academic year after a child turns 4 years old they start their formal schooling in Year R. All children must apply for a place at Wallisdean Infant School through Hampshire County Council School Admissions. The school day at Wallisdean Infant School is from 8.50am-3.10pm.

Our Early Years Curriculum intent:

The main aims of our Early Years Curriculum is to support children in the first steps of their education, building on their prior experiences, knowledge and understanding.

Through engaging, broad and balanced topics, a safe and stimulating environment and positive interactions, we aim to guide children through their early years education so that they make good progress from their individual starting points and prepare them for the next stage of their education and beyond.

We also aim to start children on their journey to becoming successful lifelong learners through the use of our learning power words:

Independence: Children, through playing and exploring, find things out and learn new things. Children learn skills to look after themselves, such as self-care.

Respectful: Children build positive relationships and develop key social skills. Children develop an early understanding of mental health and wellbeing.

Confident: Children become curious learners, seeking challenge and setting their own goals.

Resilient: Children develop can-do attitudes and learn to have a go and persist at activities that are tricky. Children know when and how to seek help.

Resourceful: Children use their own ideas, make decisions and make links when playing and learning.

Responsible: Children develop a strong sense of belonging and make positive contributions within the school community.

How do we plan for the Early Years Curriculum?

In the Early Years both Pre-School and Year R have a half-termly topic. In Pre-School a topic is driven mainly on the children's interests and experiences. In Year R interests are threaded through a topic question which has a hook and an outcome to work towards.

Staff plan a range of activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each unique child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

Planning utilizes all areas of our school environment, such as the woodland and field for Welly Walks, playground and hall for Physical Development as well as continuous provision available through the inside and outside environments. Children learn through a balance of adult-led and child-led opportunities as well as provocations and invitations to play aimed at providing new and challenging opportunities across the curriculum. In Busy Time children have access to the inside and outside environment. Provision caters for children to access all areas of the curriculum independently.

Throughout the Early Years, and as children's listening and attending develops, the balance between adult and child-led learning changes. In Year R adult-led learning increases by the end of year in preparation for the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

In Early Years adult-led learning is delivered through:

Family Time: Activities based around developing Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language. This includes developing an understanding of being responsible and respectful.

PE: Opportunities for Physical Development.

Learning Time: Activities based around developing specific areas of the curriculum.

Welly Walk: A sustained period of time in the outside environment aimed at developing children's understanding of the world.

In Year R adult-led learning extends to weekly Phonics sessions, a Computing session as well as a session with a specialist PE teacher and Music teacher.

The children in Early Years take part in other curricular activities including: visitors, a trip in Year R and participating in planned events across the Federation such as Remembrance Day.

When planning provocations, adult-led and child-led opportunities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Staff will consider how to best support children in developing their Characteristics of Effective learning:

- **Playing and exploring:** Children being independent and 'having a go', exploring and finding out things for themselves and playing with what they know.
- **Active learning:** Children getting fully involved and concentrating on activities. Developing their resilience; they keep trying and enjoy what they set out to do.
- **Creating and thinking critically:** Children developing their confidence and resourcefulness by having their own ideas and choosing ways to do things.

These are embedded in the school's Behaviour Policy which includes the six-strands approach.

What is the role of our Early Years staff?

All members of staff in our Early Years interact with all children on a daily basis. They are a key resource in supporting children's well-being, learning and development. Their role is to cater for the unique child as well as provide an enabling environment for children to learn and develop and to feel safe and secure. This includes:

- Being a positive role model for the children including the characteristics of effective learners and behaviour.
- Uphold the school's Behaviour Policy including the six-strands approach.
- Facilitating learning in adult-led and child-led opportunities offering challenge.

- Play alongside children providing challenge through appropriate interactions and supporting children's sustained shared thinking.
- Attend to their physical and emotional needs.
- Catering for a range of learning styles as well as children's interests.
- Adapting teaching strategies for the needs of the children.

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and resilient young learners.

This key person has responsibility for each child's learning and development including their well-being. The key person is responsible for assessing and planning children's learning and next steps as well as reporting to parents and carers.

In Pre-School children will be assigned a key person. Each session the key persons have a designated time to spend with their key group called Family Time. This session is aimed mainly at supporting children in Communication and Language and Personal Social and Emotional Development.

In Year R the designated key person is their Class Teacher. However each child is part of a Family Group led by a member of the Year R team. This session is aimed at supporting children's development in the Prime Areas.

In Pre-School, children's basic physical needs are met via their key person, this can include nappy changing and toileting needs. The key person can also support the parents/carers during this time, offering support and advice. We encourage children to become independent in managing their toileting needs prior to starting their formal schooling.

In Year R staff continue to support children in developing their independence. Where children have diagnosed additional needs staff will work with other agencies to ensure these needs are met.

How do we assess children's learning and development?

In the Early Years ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff will mainly assess children's learning through observing their 'golden moments' during Busy Time (child-led learning) in our environment as well as the wider school environment, such as the woodland and play ground. Staff observe across the EYFS curriculum, identifying their achievements and their characteristics as a learner. These observations are used to shape future learning experiences.

These observations are recorded in an electronic Learning Journey called Target Tracker. On starting in Pre-School or Year R Parents and Carers are able to sign up for an account with Target Tracker Link so their child's learning journey can be shared. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey through 'Proud Clouds' and, in Year R only, through class emails.

Every term we hold Parents Meetings in which the child's key worker will report to parents/carers whether children are at expected levels of development or 'exceeding' and their child's next steps based on ongoing observations. At the end of both Pre-School and Year R parents/carers will receive an 'End of Year Report' which also includes information on their child's Characteristics as an Effective Learner. They will also receive an electronic copy of their child's Learning Journey.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers as part of the End of Year R Report.

How do we work with parents/carers?

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers. This begins before a child even starts in the Early Years through a high quality and supportive transition.

In Pre-School parents/carers are invited to attend 'settling in' sessions with their child before they start. These are flexible and based around the needs of each child.

In Year R parents/carers are invited to an induction meeting to share information about children starting their 'formal school education' at Wallisdean Infant School. In addition to this there will be a home visit which is an opportunity for parents/carers to ask questions or share information in the comfort of their own home. Children and their parents/carers are invited to attend several 'Stay and Play' sessions with their child. Children also attend two transition mornings independently before starting in September.

The nature of Wallisdean Federation means that the pupils in Pre-School have the opportunity to become familiar with the adults and their peers as well as the school environment before they start in Year R. Towards the end of the academic year Pre-School children and Year R enjoy shared Welly Walks, Big Play (playground sessions) and Learning Time sessions.

Throughout Early Years Information is shared regularly with parents/carers through emailed letters, Topic News Letters and other ParentMail messages. Topic News Letters contain information on what the children are learning as well as ideas for learning at home. All children in Early Years have access to library books to read at home. In Year R this extends to access to Purple Mash, reading books and activity Bingo Cards (which have ideas for different activities to do at home). Parents and carers are encouraged to become part of our school community through invitations to a variety of special events and activities.

Linked policies: Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy

Ratified by FGB: March 2021

Review Date: Spring 2024